

Northwest Branch Stream Cleanup

Coordinated by the Neighbors of the Northwest Branch



Project Goal

To clean up the Northwest Branch stream and the surrounding area in Silver Spring. The stream runs into the Anacostia River and the Chesapeake Bay, so the larger mission was to help keep those waterways clean.

Timeline for Planning

- **Three weeks in advance:** request permission, mostly through email, from the County as well as from the property manager of the apartment complex where people parked their cars.
- **Before the clean-up:** pick up County-provided supplies, such as trash bags and gloves. The Community Outreach office is open Monday through Friday between 9:00am - 4:30pm.

How Many Volunteers?

About 12, mostly friends who knew each other.

Time Commitment

3 hours on a Saturday.

Expenses

None. The County provided supplies, namely trash bags and gloves. The apartment complex allowed the group to use their dumpsters for trash deposits.

Publicity

Since the group was comprised of friends, widespread publicity was not needed. Mostly email was used among the friends.

Challenges

The site was pretty dangerous. It had a lot of broken glass, and there was a steep hill running down to the stream from the parking lot that people had to traverse.

Results

The area looked much cleaner, and over 30 bags of trash were collected. In addition, participants “got a lot of exercise and a sense of helping the community and the environment,” says Elliot Rule.

Tips/Key Steps:

- Pick your site carefully and check it out beforehand to make sure the terrain is appropriate for the ages of the participants (this one would not have been good for young children).
- Dress for the event— meaning wear old clothes that can get very dirty.
- Bring water!

SAFETY FIRST!

- > Pick your site carefully: check it out beforehand to make sure the terrain is appropriate for the ages of participants.

